

6 November 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Committee Members

FROM: Robert M. Gates
Director, DCI/DDCI Executive Staff

SUBJECT: Minutes of 30 October 1981 Executive Committee Meeting:
(a) Proposed History Program; (b) Proposed Long-Range
Planning Process

1. The Executive Committee met on 30 October to review the proposed Agency history program and long-range planning process. Admiral Inman chaired the session; participants included Messrs. McMahon (D/NFAC), Fitzwater (DDA), George (ADDO), Taylor (ADDS&T), Lipton (Comptroller), Ware (D/EEO), [redacted] (D/IG), Sporkin (GC), Gates (D/OPP), Glerum (D/OP), and [redacted] (D/Comptroller).

2. History Program. Mr. Ken McDonald, the Agency Historian, outlined his proposed program. He emphasized his staff's need for an adequate scope and purpose for its work and the latitude to research freely and write with candor. He assured the Committee that histories would be classified and sources and methods would be protected. Committee members expressed general support for the program. Mr. McMahon endorsed producing studies of the Agency as a whole versus component histories. Mr. Fitzwater suggested giving priority to studies of the Agency's role in Vietnam. He also offered the services of the Center for the Study of Intelligence, particularly in drafting topical monographs. Messrs. Glerum and George noted concerns about protecting sources and methods. Mr. Sporkin suggested that an OGC representative serve as an advisor to assist the History Staff with potential FOIA questions. Admiral Inman concluded that Mr. McDonald had Executive Committee endorsement to carry out his program.

3. Long-Range Planning Process. Admiral Inman noted his optimism regarding the level of support for rebuilding our intelligence capabilities and stressed the importance of approaching that rebuilding with a view of where the Agency should be in the future. [redacted] Chief/Planning Staff, then outlined his staff's proposed Agency long-range planning process. He noted that a long-range planning process should provide the Agency a strategic sense of direction, be closely tied to the decisionmaking process, focus on capabilities required for the future and the means of developing them, and be compatible with and drive the new budget process. [redacted] highlighted the stages proposed for the annual planning cycle. He then advised that directorate planning representatives had raised two concerns: the impracticality of a 10-year time frame and the difficulty of determining priorities among target/subject groups.

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4. Mr. George noted the difficulty of predicting world events 10 years in the future to plan required covert action capabilities. Mr. Gates stressed that the keys to a successful planning process would be making analytical judgments drive the process and ensuring that the process would be a collaborative effort among the directorate planning staffs and the deliberately small Agency Planning Staff. He also emphasized that the proposed Agency planning process was not designed to preempt directorate planning but to bring appropriate portions of it together into a coherent Agency-wide plan. Mr. Lipton endorsed the planning concept and encouraged retaining as much flexibility in the process as possible.

5. Mr. McMahon strongly supported the planning proposal, noting that it dovetailed nicely with the recent 1985 Capabilities effort and would provide an opportunity to integrate Agency/Community activities better. He acknowledged that the process would require NFAC to be more precise in defining future requirements and welcomed the challenge. Mr. McMahon also mentioned that as an experiment, he had asked his office directors to use the Delphi methodology to determine priorities among the proposals in the 1985 Capabilities paper. Admiral Inman said that he had also conducted a prioritizing experiment and would like to compare results.

6. Mr. Ware generally supported the planning proposal but suggested that the work force should be addressed explicitly as a separate planning issue. Mr. Fitzwater, highlighting his directorate's recent refinements of its planning process, said that, ideally, the National Security Council should develop overall objectives and the Executive Committee should develop planning assumptions. Mr. Taylor seconded Mr. Ware's suggestion that the work force should be considered as a separate issue. He also suggested that the process outlined was too narrow, focusing too much on providing guidance to the Comptroller as an end product, and should be more divorced from the budget process.

7. Admiral Inman said that the process was not intended to produce another program document and that he preferred keeping the 10-year time frame to avoid that outcome. He said that a 10-year planning document should draw out multiple innovative approaches to problems rather than producing singular immediate fixes. Specific guidance for 5-year program documents could then be distilled from the broader 10-year plan. He noted that the Planning Staff was deliberately kept small so that it could be an effective catalyst for the planning process and an advocate for quality intelligence. He asked the Planning Staff to take another look at the proposed process to ensure that it would produce a sufficiently broad 10-year plan. He then concluded that while the process may be imperfect, it was time to get on with it.


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